

# **Voices from the Upper Gutter**

## **The Middle Episodes**

"Something That Could Happen To You In Lowell"

### **Danny Dupa**

**"This hallway floor is better than sleeping at home  
in the bed with my mother"**

Danny Dupa hadn't always been Vito Vaselini's sidekick / confidante. He was once a little angry boy, a long time ago. His family lived in a one-room apartment in Lowell, at 201 Middlesex Street. His father left home when he was nine months old. It was only him, his mother Charlotte, and the two dozen cats his mother kept in the room. Although the room was rather large, it always smelled of cat urine. His mother worked as a waitress, part-time. Most of the rest of the time she would spend in a bar called Simone's Hideaway, working as a hooker. Sometimes she would bring drunks home.

Danny and his mother Charlotte lived in that room on the top floor from the time he was two years old, until he moved out of the house when he was fourteen. He used to sleep in Salvation Army boxes. If it didn't have any clothes in it, he was fucked.

Lowell had a lot of rooming houses back then, and Danny would sleep in the community bathrooms at night. In some places people let him sleep, other places they'd piss on him and go back to bed. This was better than living at home with his mother and the cats.

The one room only had one bed, and he slept in that bed the whole time he lived in that room with his mother. When she brought home a drunk, he either slept in the bed, or on the floor. It was uncomfortable for him to be in that bed when his mother was having sex with these guys. After a while he would simply get out of bed and sleep on the floor. He would hold onto his pillow and pretend it was someone who really cared for him and wanted to hold him -- something he had never gotten from his mother. She was never physically abusive, but constantly degraded him verbally. He was told he was an oaf constantly by his mother.

Some of the men would stay over for a day or two. Some would act like a father figure and give him commands, like "Hey, oaf, go get me a beer." One man stayed there for over three weeks. His mother got along with him for the maximum two or three days, and they constantly fought the rest of the time he lived there. His name was Pete, and he was an all right guy. He worked on a construction crew. He drank but he wasn't mean when he got drunk. He was the first man in Danny Dupa's life that stayed with his mother that called him "Danny" and not "oaf."

Danny's mother was always watching TV -- when she wasn't at the bar. She watched soap operas. She had a restless spirit

One day something in Danny told him it was time to leave. It may have been the same old dirty, filthy, pissy, shitty sheet that he had been sleeping on for the past three weeks. It may have been because Pete left. He could no longer go to school. He felt embarrassed by what he had to wear. His mother had started to go whacko -- in alcoholic terms, I think it's referred to as "wet brain." Now for the first time in his life, she was hitting him. Through the years, Danny had developed a mean streak like his mother. And when she came at him that day, screaming and swinging, and hitting him several dozen times, he finally snapped. He whacked her six times in the face. As she was lying on the floor, he got down on his knees, opened his mouth and took a deep breath, and bit off part of her nose as she lay there convulsing.

So you can see how, for Danny, living in hallways when he first moved out was better than living at home.

One day as he was walking down Middlesex Street, going past Garnick's Music Store, he stopped and looked in the window. A man inside motioned with his hand for Danny to come in. His name was Dave Garnick. He was a repairman and delivery man at the music store. For some reason, Danny came in -- there was music playing. Something changed in Danny when he heard that music. The music was different, but the effect was the same as music had on Frankenstein's monster. It was disco.

Dave Garnick was a friendly guy and he started to talk with Danny about what music he was interested in -- he was trying to make a sale. Danny said, "I don't know -- whatta you got?" Dave said, "How do you like what's playing now," and he started to dance. Danny started to dance a little bit -- well, he was moving around.

At that time, Garnick's Music Store was the hot place to buy records in Lowell. They always had young girls working the counter who were there more for looks than intelligence. I think it was a ploy to keep young people coming in. Sometimes you'd see three different girls in one year.

Dave Garnick was always a character, and the girl who worked there at the time named Pam was looking at Dave and Dupa dancing, in awe and disbelief.

The song stopped and Dave asked Danny what he did. Danny said, "I hang around and I look for things. Sometimes I find them, sometimes I don't." Dave Garnick took this as a mystical sign, a mystical sentence. Dave asked him if he wanted to wash the windows once a week to make a couple of bucks. Robert, his brother, who actually owned the business, gave Dave a look like "What are you doing?" Dave gave him a hand sign and a look like he was saying, "Don't worry about it." Danny asked how much would it pay. Dave said, "It'll probably take you an hour, and I'll give you three bucks." Danny asked if he would have to buy records with the money. Dave said, "No,

and maybe we'll have some scratched records that you can have for free." Danny said, "I ain't got no record player." Dave said, "You do a good job, and we'll see about getting you one." Danny said to Dave, "Well, I gotta get going and go find something." Dave asked what he had to find. Danny said, "I don't know. I ain't found it yet." Dave said, "Come back in a week, and I'll have the stuff for you to clean the windows."

Danny started to walk out the door when Dave called him back and said, "Hey kid, where you living?" Danny said, "In the hallway in the rooming house above Tower News." Dave optimistically said, "Well kid, I hope they got an electrical outlet in that hallway, cause someday I'm gonna get you a record player."

## **Vito Vaselini**

"Where would I be today without my Uncle Vinnie?"

I think to better understand Vito Vaselini you would have to know something about his father, Vinnie Vaselini.

Vinnie Vaselini was born and grew up in Lawrence, Massachusetts, a coupla towns over from Lowell. Vinnie's whole life was controlled by sexual satisfaction -- he lived for porno. From his earliest days, he could be found walking along the river, looking for discarded porno magazines. When he was a teenager he used to sneak into the rest area on 110 in Methuen to watch and listen to the couples going at it. He could never control himself and would always be masturbating. Sometimes the people in the car would hear him masturbating, and they would come out and the guy would chase him and kick the shit out of him. His pants would be down -- of course, he'd run a couple of feet before he'd fall. It was impossible to masturbate with his fly down -- he couldn't get a good enough grip.

After years of being too daring, and getting the shit kicked out of him a half a dozen times, Vinnie became a tough fuck. He got a job at a gas station called West Gate Gulf in Haverhill that had a peep-out. (A peep-out is some method to look inside a ladies' bathroom without them knowing.) This one was located between the stall and the sink in an air vent in the ceiling. Wes, the owner, found it years before. It had an old one-gallon oil can on top of the grate so you couldn't look in. Word got around that there was a peep-out in this gas station. That's why Vinnie got the job there. It would be one of the few legitimate jobs he held in his whole life.

The hottest time at the peep-out was when women were changing their bathing suits after coming back from Salisbury beach. Although Vinnie didn't make much money, he'd be slipping the other attendant that was on

duty a couple of bucks so he could go an peep the women out.  
Now let's get to Vinnie's home life with Vito.

Vinnie was a sexual predator on himself. He could not control his masturbation. He would sometimes masturbate seven times in one day. Whenever he got aroused from a young woman, or sometimes an older woman, or pornography, or even a fantasy popping into his head, he had to masturbate. If he wasn't home, or someplace safe that he knew, he would have to go in a bathroom in some public building. Those were the hard times. He'd be into it, trying to be quiet, and not obvious, and someone would come in, and wash their hands, or worse yet, they would want to use the stall. Any sudden noise would throw him off. If he couldn't finish, it would drive him insane. Sometimes he would have to run in the woods. It was like being Superman. One minute you're mild-mannered, thinking about life -- the next minute you got this sexual urge that had to be satisfied.

Vinnie was a loner all his life. He had been with a number of prostitutes, a couple one-night stands with women he would pick up at a bar called the Tangerine Lounge. But these were bar-sluts -- drunk, some were over forty, but most were over fifty, and they always made him feel like they were doing him a favor. And in a way, they were.

He had a sister named Myrtle who was twenty-six. She worked hard all her life in the shoe shops in Haverhill. Remember, this is going back to the early 1950's. Myrtle got raped and had a baby. His name was Vito. He was five years old when his mother died, and he went to live with his uncle, Vinnie, where he would remain until he moved out on his own approximately ten years later.

Now we're getting a clear picture of Vito's early childhood with his uncle, Vinnie. Only thing is, he never called him "Uncle Vinnie" because he was always told that Vinnie was his father, not his uncle. Around Lawrence, in Methuen, it became a rumor that he had slept with his own sister. He let it grow and let people believe. And although he was a slime-bag, and a chronic masturbator--today you would call it sex addiction--he was preserving the honor of his sister being raped. But it was mostly to make people not think that the only women he could get were drunken women over forty or fifty, or prostitutes.

Vinnie and Vito lived in an apartment in Lawrence above a small variety store named Lafferty's. It was a two-room apartment -- well three, if you include the bathroom. Vinnie was set up in the bedroom. He collected pornography and he wasn't ashamed of it. He would have long counters with issues of his favorite mags, which he bought under the table.

When Myrtle died and Vito moved in with Vinnie, he had a reach a somewhat higher level responsibility. So he started collecting metal and things to sell at the junkyard: copper, aluminum, five-cent coke bottles. He would spend his mornings walking the alleyways of Essex Street, to forge out a living for his son. Some days he would make five dollars, some days he'd

make two dollars. On a good day he'd make ten, and him and Vito would have pizza that night. He was Italian, well, at least half, and damn proud of it.

Vinnie finally got a job at the city dump where he would work for the rest of his life, which would only be another ten years. He worked for a time in the incinerator room, but unfortunately he got demoted and had to work in the yard. It happened that the section he was in charge of was full of toxic waste, which he eventually would die from. Then they gave him the job of burning the plastic, and he'd look at that flame, so fascinated with the fire and the melting of the plastic that the fumes didn't even affect him, apparently, until he died of black lung.

Although he made steady pay, Vinnie spent it all on pornography. Now he had an 8mm movie camera, and he used to try to impress some of other guys from the dump who liked to drink beer and watch porno by inviting them over to his pad. He would have to masturbate before they came over so he could at least control himself for an hour while watching the films.

Little Vito grew up in this atmosphere, and wanted it, and hated it at the same time. He saw what this impulse was doing to his father. His father always smoked cigarettes, which made him cough even worse. I'm sure that contributed to his black lung disease. When Vito started to live with Vinnie, he was five and starting elementary school. Vinnie still hadn't gotten his dream job at the city dump, so they were struggling for a couple of years yet. Vinnie was allowed to rummage through the trash, and his apartment was filled with broken things that would never be fixed. Empty dreams, and the only thing that Vinnie would pass on to Vito when he died.

For those first two years, Vito never had nice clothes to wear to school. His father would make him a bologna sandwich or two. Most of the time he have a glass of water with his sandwiches. When his father had money, he'd have milk. When he was seven, almost eight, his father got that steady job, and he no longer had to crawl into Salvation Army boxes to find his clothes. His father took him to the Salvation Army store to *buy* the clothes. They weren't the greatest -- sometimes he'd have to get shoes that didn't fit, that were maybe a little small. It was an upper gutter existence. To be in the gutter is one thing, but when you reach your hand up on the curb and start to lift yourself up, anything could happen.

Some people, they would develop pride. But Vito developed arrogance instead. The world owed him something and he was going to get it. He never had any friends in school. He never had the opportunity to take a bath at home, cause his uncle, or rather, his father, was always in the bathroom masturbating. At least he had the dignity to take it out of his bedroom.

The last five years of his life, Vinnie became a loner. The porno came out from under the counter, and he became a connoisseur like you wouldn't believe. He got into foreign porn, nudist magazines. He would spend one quarter of his paycheck on his rent, \$25, half on porno, \$50, and the other \$25 for food and Vito.

Vito didn't know anything else. He thought this must be the way everybody lived. But he knew deep down inside that wasn't true, because the other kids in school seemed to have possibilities, and friends, and families who cared about them. The neighborhood his father and him lived in was a den of poverty, porno, prostitution, and a couple of pizza parlors. Oh yeah, and a small variety store on the corner.

When Vito was ten years old, he started smoking pot. He started drinking like the old man, but he didn't like the way he would lose control. He had an anger and a desperation in life. A need to be creative. A need to be somebody, more than the son of a dump-picker.

When Vito was almost fifteen, he and his father started to argue a lot. Vito wanted his independence. The old man would say, "Where the fuck you gonna go? You don't do nothin', you don't know nothin', you ain't nothin', you ain't gonna be anything."

His father would only say this when he was drunk and in a bad mood. Or having a porno shortage. That was the main thing that made him snap. It would happen once or twice a month, usually on a Friday after he'd get paid and be itching to buy new porn. His fascination became an obsession.

This instance was one of the worst his father ever had. He was over six days since his father had a new porno fix. He was into color porno 8mm now. His porno obsession had driven him, as it does with some people, into an addictive situation: to never be satisfied, and always be looking for new material, you might call it virgin material, because they have never seen it before. Vinnie had been promised a film, a Swedish lesbian film, with four lesbians, in color, doing everything. He had never seen anything like this in his life, on film. He had seen two women and one man, and the two women go at it a little bit. But never all women. His dream fantasy would come true. He would be able to pretend to be any one of the participants in the film, and as it would turn out, this image would become embedded in his brain up until the moment he died.

After that fight, Vito left the house, and went to sleep in a Salvation Army box. He knew the ones that had clothes in them and were warm. It was winter time. He didn't have a friend's house to go to. Once in his life he had one person that wanted to be his friend, but Vito didn't want to take a chance. He wanted to make it one his own. Not pride, arrogance.

He slept in that Salvation Army box for a week. The longest he had been out of the house before was two days. By this time, he didn't bother going to school. He lived out of trash cans. He went in restaurants and tried to look inconspicuous -- and for him, that was virtually impossible -- and ate the food left on people's plates. He could've had a job as a dishwasher at a small diner on the other side of town, Lawson's Diner, where he would eat food at night when it was late. The waitress knew he was hard-up after the second night, and let him eat the table scraps. The owner, a good Italian man named Angelo, offered him a job as a dishwasher, but his pride, or rather his arrogance, told Vito that this was beneath him. The world would see him as a prominent figure. He may have been told he was a nothing, but

at least he was going to be his own nothing.

On the seventh day after leaving home, he decided to go home and see if his father was still pissed off. When he got home, he walked up the stairs to the two-room apartment, three if you count the bathroom. He was stopped by the landlady across the hall, a Polish lady, who said, "Vito, where you been?" "What do you care?" said Vito. "Didn't you hear what happened to your father?" Vito said, "No, what happened?" Suddenly panic erupted in Vito. He had that queasy feeling in his stomach. "They took your father to the hospital three days ago. He's very sick -- they say he's gonna die."

Vito walked into the apartment. He felt empty. He clenched his fist, wondering what he would do now. The living room was full of all the junk his father had collected, hanging on the walls, stacked up in the corners, lying around everywhere. He walked into his father's bedroom and saw it empty of all his pornographic things -- there was only his father's bed, and a couple of Playboys.

He walked out the apartment door, he knew he had to go see his father, he didn't want to, but he felt he had to. The landlady told him when he came out, that his father's friends at the city dump had come by after his father went to the hospital and taken his pornography.

Vito goes to Lawrence General Hospital. He has never been in a hospital before, and feels even more awkward than he does in life. He doesn't even know who to ask. He walks in and asks a lady in the gift shop where his father is. She tells him to go to the desk. He finds out his father is in the ICU on the fifth floor. He goes there, goes to the nursing station, and asks for his father, room 514.

The nurse asks Vito who he is, and he says, "I'm his kid." Now he is flooded with emotion. The nurse tells him what condition his father is in, it's critical, he has lung cancer in his extremely advanced stages. His father had been looking thin lately, but Vito thought he wasn't eating enough, and masturbating too much, if there was such a thing.

Vito asks if he can see him. The nurse says yes and takes him to the room. His father is lying in bed barely conscious. Vito walks to the bed, and looks at his father's face.

His father's eyes open, and he says, "Vito, I'm glad you came, son. I've got somethin' I gotta tell you. I'm real sick, dead sick. Don't bother coming back to see me again, 'cause I'm not gonna be here, I'm probably gonna be dead. My only regret is, I'm too weak to masturbate one more time.

"But Vito, I got somethin' else I gotta tell you. I ain't your father. I'm your uncle."

Vito says, "Am I a child of incest?"

His uncle says, "No, and don't let anybody ever tell you that you are. Your mother got raped and had you, and then she died. But I want you to know somethin'. I've been calling you a nothing all your life. That's because I didn't want you to become a nothing, like me. You can be something in life, Vito. I don't know what, but you've got some crazy impulses flashing around in your brain, and you might as well use them."

For the first time in Vito's life, he started to cry. Just a little. He said to his uncle, "You'll always be my old man."

Vinnie looked at his son one last time and said, "Vito, get out that door, get out of this town, make something of yourself, and don't look back."

Vito starts to leave, but his father stops him and says two more things. "I had to sell all my porno to the guys at the dump to pay some gambling debts. You never knew about my gambling, Vito, and I hoped you never would. So take my advice, and don't gamble. And the other thing -- you're the sole heir to all my belongings, Vito, all that good stuff I collected all my life. It's yours."

Vito walked out that door at that moment, because he knew it was something that he had to do. He went back to the apartment where his father had lived, took his clothes and his few belongings -- a baseball glove he would someday use -- his father found it at the dump and gave it to him when he was eight years old. He takes one last look at the living room, deciding if there is anything else of his father's he should take -- or rather, his uncle's. He saw a dirty black comb that his father had always prized. It was the first good thing he found at the dump, years before. Vito put it in his pocket, and left that apartment and left Lawrence forever. He migrated to Lowell and got a job at the porno shop, Tower News. A new beginning for Vito.

He bought the Lawrence Tribune for the next week, looking for his father's obituary. He thought maybe they wouldn't even bother to put it in. But on the eighth day, he saw it. It read: "Vinnie Vaselini. Died at Lawrence General Hospital at 2:45 a.m., of cardiac arrest. He was a city worker, employed at the city dump. He is survived by a son, Vito."



# Vito and Dupa

## A Friendship Made in ...

("Scratchier" and "Sniffier")

Vito comes to Lowell. He's nineteen years old. He's never had a job. He has no idea how he's going to survive, but he knows he will. He has to. Vito has a destiny, a purpose in life. What that purpose was, was still unknown. He thought to himself that he was never gonna be called a nothing again.

He had never worked a job, so he didn't know what he was going to do that day when he came into Lowell on that bus. He walked around town scoping out the area -- he had never been to Lowell before. The low-lives of Lowell would hang out on Appleton Street and Gorham Street, where there was a porno shop.

Vito had twenty bucks in his pocket his old man had given him. He stopped at Elliott's and got two Lincolns -- the term used there for a hotdog with relish on the bottom and mustard on top. That night he slept in a Salvation Army box, but there weren't any clothes in it. That was alright, because it was summer. But when he woke up at 11 o'clock the next morning, it was hot as an oven in there. He took off his pants and took off his underwear because he had shit his pants overnight. He left them in the corner of the box, and climbed out. This was the day that he was going to start making something of himself.

Two weeks before his father died, Vito had dropped out of the ninth grade. He was nineteen. He had stayed back once in the eight grade, and two times in the ninth. In that ninth grade, Vito was already thinking of selling drugs to make money. So now he's in Lowell, and he goes off to face his first full day in the city.

Now that same day, it so happened that Danny Dupa was washing the windows at Garnick's Music Store. He had been doing it for a couple of months, and doing a decent job. He never spoke too much, but he was always smoking cigarettes. He used to roll them himself, from canned tobacco, Bugler. He had smoked heavily since he was nine years old. Sometimes he would cough so hard he would vomit. He had never been breast-fed by his mother, and this was an oral substitution -- he didn't know it, but it was.

After washing windows that day and getting his three dollars from Dave Garnick -- who besides doing sales and service, was also the repair specialist -- Dupa bought a root beer from the tonic machine for 25 cents, walked outside to the front of the store, took a long hard swig of the root

beer, and looked out into Lowell, contemplating his next move.

Dupa turns and starts to walk aimlessly up Middlesex Street with the tonic in his hand, half empty. He walks up Elliott Street to Elliott's Diner, and sees a guy sitting on the bench eating a hotdog. As Dupa is walking by Vito, Vito asks him for a cigarette. Dupa silently sits next to Vito and rolls a Bugler cigarette from a small Bugler rolling machine that Dave Garnick had bought him for sweeping out the store. As he's rolling the cigarette, Vito is looking at him. Dupa passes him the cigarette, and Vito lights it. Dupa rolls one for himself, and lights up.

Although it's only one or two minutes in actual time, Dupa has a thought of his mother. She took off. He had not seen her since she left that fateful day that he bit a piece of her nose off. Some people said that she moved up north. But years later they found out that she had been murdered by a big fat black man.

Dupa didn't have his mother, but now at least he had a friend, Dave Garnick. Dave Garnick wasn't the type of guy to hang around with, he had other things to do -- marriage, girlfriends, family matters. Dupa needed someone of his own level of economic destitution, and Vito needed someone like that too.

Vito looks over at Dupa and says, "So what's happening in this town?"

Dupa says, "What do you mean?"

Vito says, "I'm new in this town, and I gotta get me someplace to live, and a way to make money."

Dupa says, "Have you ever thought about collecting bottles and cans?"

Vito thinks for an instant of his father's days of doing that very same thing, and replies, "I'm not gonna do that kind of shit. I want to make fast money and hang around with fast people."

Dupa says, "The fastest people I see around here hang around in a couple of areas, and let me tell you what they are." Dupa thinks to himself that someone has finally recognized his minor intelligence. He has acquired a social significance. Suddenly he can be an expert. He's grown up in Lowell and lived there all his life. He tells Vito of the hot spots in Lowell.

"First of all, you got three strip clubs in Lowell -- the Three Copper Men on Fletcher Street, the Celebrity on John Street, and Nicky's on Gorham Street. Across the street from Nicky's is Tower News, the hot spot for decadence and lowered sophistication."

Dupa says he's heard Tower News needs somebody to work inside, cleaning up.

Vito says, "Cleaning up what?"

Dupa says, "Cleaning up stuff that needs to be cleaned."

Vito says, "Are you sure they need somebody?"

Dupa says, "Yup, I'll take you down there if you want."

Vito says, "Okay." Then Vito says, "You ever smoke real cigarettes, kid? You know, like Marlboros." Vito smoked Marlboros when he had the money to buy cigarettes.

Dupa says, "Nope."

Vito says, "Well kid, if I get this job, I'm going to buy a pack of Marlboros, and we're gonna smoke like brothers."

Vito got that job at Tower News. A year later Dupa found out he had throat cancer, and had a laryngectomy, and lost the use of his voice. Thanks to Dupa telling Vito about the job at Tower News, and becoming his confidante, Vito stuck by Dupa before and after the operation. This would be a bond and trust that would last the rest of their lives.

Vito started selling drugs, Dupa was his delivery guy. Later Vito would work at the Celebrity. Later still, he became the kingpin in Lowell of soiled women's panties.

## **Nick D (of Prophecy)**

### **On the Edge, But Never Quite Over It**

This adventure could not have happened without the collaboration of Nick D, one of Lance Gargoyle's closest and most trusted friends in music and in life.

At one time in Nick's life his appearance resembled Alec Baldwin in *Miami Blues*. Nick never had the evil attitude of Junior (the part Baldwin played), but he sure had that survival attitude at one time in his life. He went there, he came back, he went there again, and he finally, hopefully, came back for good.

Lance Gargoyle met Nick D in 1983. Dan the Man Santana, a jamming buddy of Lance's, told Nick when he came back into town, "You gotta meet this guy Lance Gargoyle." Nick D played guitar very well. He enjoyed jazz and played jazz very well, and was very polished.

At that time Lance lived at 231 Appleton Street on the third floor, across the hall from his best buddy, Dave Rawlings. Lance lived in apartment #10, and it had a roof outside its only window. It was a single room, with slanted ceilings because of the roof. Lance would sit out on the roof in the summer time because it was cool. When Dan came over with Nick and introduced him to Lance, Lance knew right away that he would become a valuable ally. Not only did he enjoy jazz as Lance did, but he enjoyed Lance's music. Nick started stopping over regularly, and he and Lance became good friends. Nick met some other musicians that Lance knew, including Dave Id, and later got interested in industrial type music. Nick liked to hang around the neighborhood a lot at night. It turned out that he would sometimes be picking up hookers.

He had just come back from living in California for the past eight years. He was a wild man, like Lance. The hairiest arms and hairiest chest you've ever seen. Nick was always smiling and in a good mood, always goofing on life. He had a Dodge Dart, slant six. Eventually he started to work at the hospital where Lance worked, in the supply room. Eventually he would leave and work as a delivery person.

Lance and Nick had a number of adventures. One was when some hookers had stolen some of Lance's musical equipment. Lance had let his guard down and for a moment trusted the nobility of the human race. He knew where one of the hookers hung out in Salem, New Hampshire. Nick D and Lance drove up there. They parked outside the house, and Nick D said he'd get out and check it out. Lance saw him walk up to the door, and then go inside. After a few moments, Lance got out of the car, and went inside too. Lance asked Nick, "What's up?" Nick said, "Nobody's home -- I'm looking

for your guitar." Nick and Lance were searching the house of some guy they didn't know while he wasn't home. They quickly looked around, then left. Lance would never forget the daring that Nick D showed that day -- he was a true friend.

Lance would go down to where Nick D was living on Lawrence Street. Nick would record Lance doing his "monster songs," which were his vocal tunes. Nick was not only an excellent guitarist, but also extraordinarily capable in recording.

Nick had had his Class One tractor trailer license since he was eighteen. He started to drive for Poopoo Propane. He made good money. He had used heroin sparingly in the past, while he was in California. He did it occasionally when he came back to Lowell. Now he was doing it more regularly -- too regularly. He was making terrific money, making long hauls, but he got laid off, and he started using more and more. His unemployment ran out. He moved into 231 Appleton Street. Lance lived downstairs, and was the manager of the building.

Nick lived there for a couple of months, and eventually had to leave. He knew he was bringing too much heat down on the building. Nick wasn't the type of junkie that would hang around with other junkies. Only just to find the new locations where he could cop. A lot of times Nick was speed-balling -- coke and heroin. Nick was bringing heat on the building, and this was putting a strain on his friendship with Lance. He ended up moving out and going into detox.

After that Nick's life went down the drain a little bit more. Nick D had always talked about decadence, and now he was living it. Living in abandoned buildings, taking copper wire from abandoned buildings, like the Gilmore Building on Middlesex Street. He'd cash it in at the junkyards on Tanner Street. But his big thing was -- shoplifting. CDs, anything small. He was in another world now, a world of junkies, decadence, and more decadence. He was a little bit ashamed of what he had become, and didn't want to face his friends.

For a while he lived with Emil Beaulieu, of Emil's Eccentric Records, but that didn't work out. Emil also performed industrial music, and he jammed with Nick D, sometimes in clubs as "Due Process." They made recordings when they lived together, but that's another story, that happened before where we are now.

So now Nick is wallowing in decadence. He had that hungry, on-the-edge look. His face was pitted with sores. He exited from society.

After several years of this, Lance bumped into Nick again. Nick was always evasive, like a shadow. Lance could never track him down. But now he had found him, and they hooked up. Lance had a lot to tell his best buddy Nick D. Lance had moved, and was now creating music on a Korg 01w fd keyboard musical workstation. Lance had started to create the music of his dreams -- abstract, experimental music, multilayered, multitextural, multitracked compositions. Lance loved his music. The year was 1993.

Nick stopped up to see Lance and hear some of his music. Nick got on

welfare and moved into Lance's new building. Nick had been diagnosed with the AIDS virus. He got on welfare, and then he applied for social security. The welfare money helped him get into the building that Lance lived in, across the hall from Lance.

Lance had started doing coke once in a while, before he and Nick hooked up again. Eventually Lance convinced Nick to cop for him. Lance would do ten or twenty dollars worth at a time, never wanted to go out more, which is the norm. Nick would sometimes be content with a twenty, but sometimes would want more, and want to get some heroin too, to go with it. Lance never wanted to meet these people who sold the drugs, and he never did. Lance would drop Nick off in the neighborhood, and meet Nick around the corner. Sometimes they'd have to go to four place before they found something.

The thing with coke is, first you're counting how many days you did it, and then you're counting how many days you didn't. A little was never enough for Nick, and he never had enough money, and he would shoplift. He had got caught one or two times in the past, and now he got caught again for the third or fourth time. One of those times he was arrested, because he got caught stealing the copper from the buildings. In any case, when he got caught shoplifting, he eventually got sentenced to nine months in jail.

By now Nick had been approved for social security, had gotten a big check, bought some things, and was broke and shoplifting. I don't know how long he was in jail -- maybe it was only three or five months. Lance held his apartment for him, and took care of his checks. Lance visited him once, and he would write Lance once in a while.

Eventually Nick got out. He was all right for a while, but eventually he got into the same routine again. For courtesy's sake, Nick D moved out again. He got caught shoplifting, and screwed up his probation, so he went to jail again, I think. A couple of years later, Lance bumped into Nick again. He had been off drugs for a couple of years, and was getting his life together again. That was a couple of years ago -- Lance hasn't seen him since. But he's sure he's still doing good, cause Nick D always had that core of goodness and genuine concern for humanity, and he was a good guy.

Someday Lance is going to bump into Nick D again. Maybe in Lowell. Lance knows his last known residence was in Somerville. His mother lives in Lowell, but she can't find his address. Nick, if you're out there, Lance still has some of those recordings, baby, of you and him jamming, and some day, people are gonna hear some of the music of Nick D and Prophecy.

## **Mike of "Mike and the Spikes"**

### **Lance's Guitar Guru**

One quality that people would never say that Mike of "Mike and the Spikes" would ever exhibit, was what Lance Gargoyle would term, "vanity overload."

Mike was Lance Gargoyle's first and only guitar guru. They met at Solomon Mental Health on Varnum Ave in Lowell. Although Sidney Hipple is the primary candidate for past mental health issues, Lance had a short stint at Solomon himself. Lance met Mike one day in the piano room. Mike was playing a little piano, and Lance started to talk to Mike about music. Lance had brought in his hollow body bass guitar. At that time Lance wasn't really a competent or polished musician. Oh yeah, he could sing pretty good, and he could always create some musical expressions on the bass -- but he didn't have any training.

Later on that day, after Mike and Lance met, Lance let Mike play his bass guitar. Mike could play it as a bass, or as a guitar, much better than Lance. But Mike being the humble guy that he was, didn't act all uppity. He was just playin', man. He was groovin' that groove. Lance thought to himself, "This guy is pretty talented, and it appears that he has at least a half a brain in his head." But overall he was a good person. They talked about jazz. Mike showed Lance the major chords on the piano. They became fast friends.

Mike was a little out there at times. But not so far that Lance didn't know where he was heading. Eventually Lance and Mike got out (of Solomon Mental Health). Not at the same time. But they got out. Lance would never go back, but Mike would make many more appearances over the years.

When Lance got out, he got on welfare, and lived in a one-room on Summer Street, the white building. If you ever go to Lowell, and go on Summer Street, you'll know what building it was. It's abandoned now. Years after Lance moved out, they put chicken wire on the downstairs window so people wouldn't break in.

Lance never lived on his own before, and he had never been good with money. Someone stole his food stamps, and he had no money. Sometimes Mike and Lance would sneak in the lunch line at Solomon. The cafeteria people would assume that they were day patients. Sometimes a friend of theirs, a drummer named Roger Mono -- he had been in Solomon in the past too -- would go in the line with them.

None of them ever had money. They used to go into an outreach program of Solomon called the Renaissance Club. Patients and ex-patients used to hang around there when it was open. They had free donuts, and coffee was only a dime. Roger, Lance, and Mike were always bumming cigarettes. Roger always acted like the slickster -- he'd see a young woman walking down the street, need a cigarette, and say, "Hey babe, got a butt?" Although he rarely got any women, he had that self-confidence that Mike and Lance lacked, bumming from strangers.

After Lance smashed his hollow body bass against his radiator, Mike sold Lance a hollow bodied guitar that only had the four bass strings on it. That was all Lance played for a long time. If you're a real musician and you want to really play, you'll play anything that you got.

Mike showed Lance the simple blues, bar chords, and a couple other tricks that they could jam together. Eventually they recorded some songs together: "Vibrator Blues" with lines that said, "She's a girl who loves a vibrator / Even in the refrigerator / Every time I call or date her / She says I'll see you later."

Lance and Mike had a number of adventures. There weren't too many genuine people that Lance found to hang around with in Lowell. But Mike was a guy that Lance could trust.

One of their adventures involved hitch-hiking from Lowell to Salem, New Hampshire to donate blood for money. They walked a good portion of the way. Early on, when they first started out walking along the road, Mike would pick up cigarette butts off the ground to smoke. Lance only smoked Marlboros. Sometimes Mike would find a Marlboro that wasn't smoked too much, and Lance, dying for a cigarette, would accept.

So they're walking along. Mike is always looking on the ground.. Sees something wrapped in tinfoil. He picks it up and opens it. It was pot. Lance enjoyed smoking pot. Mike was primarily a wine drinker, so he rarely smoked much pot. Walking along, Lance got a little bit of a buzz.

After three or four hours they finally got to Salem, New Hampshire, to the blood donor place. For some reason, they denied Mike -- maybe it was his extra, extra Bohemian appearance and attitude. Maybe his blood was fucked up. But they took Lance. Now the two of them had fifteen bucks and some pot. The first thing Lance did, was buy a couple packs of cigarettes.

They started walking and hitchhiking home to Lowell. They walked a long ways. Finally, walking on 495, the traffic had slowed down so much that they were walking faster than the cars were moving, and somebody let them in and gave them a lift.

You know that four string hollow body guitar that Lance bought from Mike for fifteen dollars? It took Lance four months to pay him off. Sometimes Lance would duck Mike because he would feel guilty about not having any money. Mike was the type of guy that wouldn't have cared anyways.

Eventually Mike got a one room apartment at 73 Fletcher Street. He had all types of stuff in there that he found on the street. Big stereo consoles



that parts of it worked. Eventually Lance got a job as a pot washer at St. Joseph's Hospital, but they paid him every two weeks. In between pay periods, Lance would bum food stamps from Mike. Sometimes Lance would try to pay Mike back, but Mike didn't care anyways.

After a couple of years of working at the hospital, and becoming the stock clerk for the kitchen, Lance drifted away from his old friends. He had developed friendships with people who worked at the hospital, and as time went on, he hooked up with other musicians from Lowell. Dan Santana -- Lance and him formed a group called "The Distortion Brothers." Lance played chords with a lot of distortion. Danny played lead with a lot of distortion. Another musician who came into Lance's scene when he lived at 231 Appleton Street was The Claw, Riff Graft. He always had a great guitar and great equipment, and loved playing lead and using the whammy bar. The friggin guy knew every conceivable scale there ever was to play on guitar.

Danny lived in the projects on Salem Street near the hospital. Danny's father was an older man. Danny would be wailing loudly on his Gibson, playing lead along with an album. His father would sit in the kitchen like it didn't even affect him.

Sometimes Mike would stop by and visit Lance, but he'd always want something, and look decrepit. Lance still had an ugly side back then, a selfish side. One day Mike stopped over to visit -- he'd gotten hit by a car, and his arm was in a sling, and he was bruised pretty badly. Mike just wanted someone to talk to. Lance knew Riff Graft was on his way over to play guitar. Lance had Mike sit in the closet the size of a phone booth, hidden away when Riff came over. Mike never thought it was any big deal, but later on, Lance would feel like "Maybe I shouldn't have fuckin' done that to Mike."

Lance felt he was entering into a new productive phase in his life. Mike's lifestyle seemed almost primitive to Lance. And remember, Mike was the type of guy who would have given Lance the shirt off his own back. Maybe Mike reminded Lance of his desperate days in Lowell, that he wanted to forget. Because Mike had continued to go in and out of the hospital, Solomon, Lance felt that Mike would never leave that ugly cycle of institutions and nut juice.

After a couple of years, Mike stopped by and saw Lance. He had a job, a car, and a girl friend. He was washing and delivering automobiles at a dealership with his brother worked. He had been regularly taking medication, and his erratic moods had stabilized.

Couple years later, Mike was off the medication and back to his old self. Like Lance, Mike felt that the medication, or as they called it, the nut juice, severely altered a person's creativity, and the side effects always made you look like a goon. Your tongue would twist, your thoughts would still be racing a mile a minute, but your body didn't go no place, you felt lazy. That's why Mike never liked taking medication.

Eventually Lance surrendered his self-importance towards himself, and was more open to Mike's presence and situation. He even lived in Lance's building on Appleton Street for a while -- three different times, three different

landlords. But Lance learned to live with the quirks of his good friend Mike, cause deep down inside, Mike was a humble, genuine guy who never ever had a bad word to say about anybody, even if they ripped him off. Okay, he might bitch a little bit, but he'd soon forget about it.

Mike always liked wine. He had got accepted for social security benefits, and would spend most of the money after he got it on the first of the month. Mike would always be working on something. He'd have a couple of TVs in his room, with the chassis removed. The TVs would be somewhat working. Mike hung around with some real characters. Ditch Dooby for one.

Lance could usually put up with Mike for about six or seven months, before Lance would start to lose it. Mike would have no sense of time. Banging and building on the floor at three o'clock in the morning was not unusual for him. But they always remained friends. Mike would get on anybody's nerves, and he knew he got on Lance's nerves after a while.

Years later Mike would even live in the big building, the undisclosed building that Lance lives in now, that people can't know about because they'd bother him. Mike was regularly doing crack when he got his check, for a couple of days anyways. Lance would have Mike help out around the building that they lived in, and that Lance managed. Mike could make a couple extra bucks vacuuming the hallway, cleaning a refrigerator or a stove. Mike was meticulous and impeccable in his cleaning, for many years anyways.

Lance had adjusted to Mike and his ways. One month while he was waiting for his check to come in, he built a friggin acoustic guitar from scrap wood. He made a guitar neck, and went to Russo's Music and got some frets to put on it. It played and looked good, and Mike never had any fancy tools to work with either. But the first of the month came around, Mike got his money, got some crack, and smashed the guitar. Oh shit, I forgot -- Mike was always getting good guitars, or at last decent-playing guitars, and smashing them, or throwing them into the canal. The friggin guy had talent. His fingers were luck Gumbie when he played the guitar neck, the way they'd twist around to make a chord. He was a character, I'll tell you that.

Eventually the building got sold and Mike, who as usual was behind on his rent, had to move. Lance wouldn't see him too often. Mike got arrested for urinating on the side of a building, and although it was a criminal matter, they put him in Tewksbury Hospital, where he remained for over a year. Lance went to visit Mike a couple of times, and it was a trip. This wasn't like the old carefree days at Solomon Mental Health. Most of the people in Tewksbury weren't going to ever come back. But Lance knew that Mike would. And eventually he did get released, under the condition that he go to a half way house and take medication, or nut juice.

Lance always stops whenever he sees Mike riding his bike around town, or walking around town. They always have a good chat, and Lance always makes Mike feel like he's the most important person in the world, and certainly a member of the human race. Lance remembers when Mike lives in the building and would sometimes be talking to himself in his room. Lance

would knock on his door and give him something to eat. Most of the time that's all he needed. Or someone to talk to. Lance found out for Mike, as for most people, the three basic requirements are -- to feel a part of society, if you want to call it that, or humanity, what it really is -- the three requirements are: something to eat, something to do, and someone to listen to you once in a while.

Lance learned a lot from Mike, not just a couple of guitar chords. He learned about genuineness and humbleness and understanding. You know when Mike was living in 73 Fletcher Street on welfare and food stamps, what he said to Lance one time? "The same people you see going up the ladder, is the same people you see going down." Mike will always be remembered by Lance as Mike of "Mike and the Spikes." Although nowadays Mike is on the nut juice and unable to be as creative as he once was, but I'm sure in that halfway house, if they let him, he still working on something in his room. He talks about being trapped in that zombie environment with the other residents, but he's gonna make it. He got hit by a car and got a lawsuit, and got hit by a car other times and didn't get a lawsuit. But he always came back with that zest and gusto, and that enduring conviction that even if life sucks right now, chances are it's gonna get better when the check comes in at the first of the month.

# Lance Gargoyle

## The Saga Continues From There to Now

Lance was always jamming with people at the *Rialto*. He had had that big night on Halloween with Quigley, Juan, Dave and Ed Id, and, oh, I forgot, Nick D was on stage too, doing the industrial stuff. The Rialto was on downtown Central Street, across from the Copper Kettle. Downstairs was a bowling alley. The building was owned by a guy named Dominic -- at least he ran the bowling alley and collected the rent for the rehearsal rooms that were upstairs.

Next to the first floor entrance, a locked door leading into the hallway of the rehearsal area was another another door that went to the massage parlor. Yeah, Lowell still had them. The door would be open, and you'd walk by, and it smelled like a combination of sweat, perfume, maybe a little semen, and who knows what else coming out of that door. None of the musicians who played in the rehearsal rooms ever went downstairs. But during breaks guys would be looking out the side window in the hallway, seeing the young women going to work.

Who knows what the lives of those girls were? Who knows how long they had been doing it? Who knows they would be doing it? Soon, in a couple of months the massage parlors were gonna close. The chicks were too classy to go on the street. Would they become exotic dancers? Would they meet a guy with enough money and understanding, and maybe a little pizazz? Probably not. There's too many losers out there looking for women that don't have any real dreams. When you're involved in that life, somehow you go inside a shameful place. 'Cause after all, you ain't gonna tell your family or people who may respect you that you work in a massage parlor. Maybe they'd be in porno books, maybe some of them already are. Maybe they'd go in porno films. But most likely they're gonna end up hooked up with some loser that doesn't feel nothin'. And if they think they find religion, then they really become a zombie. Especially if they're the type who couldn't be an Amway salesperson, so they get involved with New Age bullshit. Okay, okay, maybe some of them meet a decent guy out there. But the rest of 'em just become a different type of zombie.

So anyways, let's talk about the bands and the happenings up there in the practice rooms. In the beginning, Lance shared a room with Riff Graft. The rent was like \$89 a month, and you could go there any time you wanted, and fucking jam. Dave the drummer shared a room across the hall with Danny. Funky Dave was the best drummer Lance had ever played with. We'll call him Funky Dave, because he played in a funk band at one time. Actually,

it was disco, but for the record, let's say it was funk.

Lance used to have jams once a week. It would be Funky Dave on drums, and Johnny B on guitar or bass, oh, and of course, Lance Gargoyle, guitar, maybe a little bass, and a little keyboard thrown in for good measure on the side. You could start a rhythm, and Funky Dave would pick it up and groove with it, and throw small embellishments in almost like a sixth sense. Sometimes it was John on bass and Lance on guitar. Sometimes Lance did some vocals, and sometimes Johnny B did some vocals too. They'd get together around 7 o'clock on a Tuesday night. Johnny B would arrive with a bottle of wine, a wine glass, and his guitar and amp. Dave would bring his drum set over from his room into Lance's.

Lance could always think of something simple, but interesting to play, that both of the guys could follow along with easily to explore and improvise through. Lance used to record all the jams and practically everything that he ever did, live or at the Rialto with whoever he'd be jamming with at the time. They used to have a great time.

Across the hall in one of the big front rooms, was a heavy metal band. Not so much heavy metal -- kind of like Rush. Lance had been jamming with a couple of years with two young musicians, Jamie Walsh and Dave Glasswetter. Jamie played guitar and Dave G played bass. At one time before the Rialto, Lance had jammed with them and another young drummer named Wayne. They even played out at this high school musical exhibition with a large audience. That was weird for Lance, who was older at that time than the other guys. They jammed for a while, but drifted apart, when Porky -- I mean, Wayne, that was his nickname -- went into the service, and they didn't have a drummer. Lance showed Jamie some simple blues chord structures, and some other standard four- or five-chord wonders. Lance could play lead.

So anyways, after Lance had had the rehearsal rooms for a while, he changed over to a big front room facing Central Street, and Dave and Jamie got a room together beside his. You could have the window open on the Friday night in the summertime, and be jamming at 11 o'clock or later, or even just playing alone or practicing.

At this time in the history of the Rialto, Funky Dave would jam with Lance inside the practice room. Funky Dave was always a humble guy -- one thing that Lance always looked for. He always wanted to get in a band that played out and made money, as he had done in the past.

The band across the hall was a real friggin heavy metal band -- two brothers. Now this is back around '82 or '83 that I'm talking about, and these guys had the big hair, the Marshall amps cranked up so that you couldn't even hear yourself across the hall. They were always doing coke, and had coke whores up in the practice room. Those guys were a trip.

Dominic, the owner, even actually let a relative live in one of the rooms. You got to remember, these rooms didn't have any sink or nothin'. The bathrooms were down the hall, and believe me, sometimes they could get real roquey, especially when a toilet wasn't working, or somebody got

sick in the bathroom. Lance took it upon himself to clean the toilets for Dominic for free -- at least he could have a clean shit when he wanted it.

Eventually the Rialto closed and Lance had to go back to rehearsing in his patio studio at 231 Appleton Street, on the third floor. The hallway bathrooms in the building were never really very clean, and Lance offered to clean them. Wait a minute, let's back up a little bit. This building used to be owned by a little old lady -- yeah, I said a little old lady. A guy at the City approached her when she was behind on her taxes. A guy named Bub. He told the lady that he'd have someone that would buy it from her, and she wouldn't lose the house. It was his common law wife. They got the building friggin dirt cheap. At that time, in the late 70's, for maybe not even \$20,000.

When Lance moved into the building in '78, Bub and his common law wife Carol lived downstairs in the three-room apartment that had its own side entrance. They used to fight like wild. Carol would be screaming at the top of her lungs, "Bub, I want to go!" Carol would probably have a little buzz, but Bub would be cocked, and say in a quiet sinister voice, "Where you gonna go, Carol?" Carol would be whining and say, "I just want to leave, Bub."

At that time, Carol would enter the rooms once a week to clean them and change the linen. They always knew the appearance of their building and the tenants' rooms. No one could live with anybody in the single rooms that were there. A number of times Bub found out someone was living with somebody, and actually threw their clothes out on the sidewalk and locked them out. Once his wife had changed the sheets and found some panties there. Bub went bananas. Sometimes at night he'd bang on Lance's door, because Lance played his TV too loud.

Eventually Bub and Carol moved to another place that they had, and Bub's daughter and son-in-law moved into the old place and collected the rent. They used to fight like hell too, and scream and holler and have the cops come down, but things were a little looser in the building. Eventually Bub sold the building to a guy named Vinnie who owned a lot of property in Lowell at once time. Vinnie was a good guy, and renovated the hallway and all the rooms the best he could. They had panelling, everyone had a sink and a little refrigerator and a stove. Eventually the building got sold to another property owner named George H. This guy was an alright guy. His sons Geoff and Glen also did repairs and renovations on the building.

This is the time when Lance started to take care of the building for George. He vacuumed the hallway twice a week, and cleaned the two common bathrooms. George took five dollars off his rent. Lance always did a good job, as he did with everything he took on. After four months, he asked for a five dollar raise. George said, "Nope, but I'll give you two dollars more a week." After maybe another six months to a year, Lance got tired of tenants that were such slobs that he told George he didn't want to go the bathrooms anymore. One guy named Kenny was shitting in the upstairs bathtub.

George made Lance the manager. Now Lance's job was interviewing applicants and showing the vacant rooms, and collecting the rent -- besides keeping the place in good order. Lance began to learn about people's

character and behavior. It isn't easy to be a good judge of character or behavior. Basically you look for someone who's gonna be able to pay the rent, that don't mind living in one room. Even at \$40 - \$50 a week -- which were the rents back then, in the mid-80's.

George was a good guy, and so was the rest of his family, including his wife, Barbara, who Lance talked to on the phone sometimes when he had problems. Things were going pretty good for Lance. He worked at the hospital downstairs as a materials handler. He had started off as a pot washer at Saint Joe's Hospital, and after eight months had become a stock clerk for the kitchen. After four years he transferred to central stores and became the supply clerk. Eventually he would transfer to the receiving area, and remain there for many years.

One day Lance got home and he found out that George had sold the building to three police officers. He found this out because they turned off the gas to transfer the meter to the new owners, but the new owners hadn't hooked it up yet. Lance called George, and found out that the building had been sold. The three police officers came over the next day to meet Lance, the manager of the building. One of them named Tom asked Lance how long he had lived in the building, and Lance told him, twelve years. Tom said, "You're the manager."

Lance rarely saw the other two police officers and mainly dealt with Tom, who was an alright cop. It was good having three cops own the building, because Tom would knock on the tenants' doors when they got behind on their rent, or a drug addict had slipped through, and Tom would tell them to get out.

The three cops also bought a building in Centerville from George, which had thirty-one units. They offered Lance to manage it. Lance refused, because he didn't want the extra work, and because he didn't want to leave -- believe it or not, the neighborhood, or the building. After a couple of years, the old die downstairs in the two-room apartment called Whitey went to a nursing home, and Lance got that apartment. Now he had his own bathroom. All nine other tenants had to share the bathrooms that were in the hallway.

They got some crooked bizzbong named Jerry to manage the bigger building in Centerville on Christian Hill. He was found out, and Tom got rid of him, and brought in Lance to manage that building also. Lance didn't want to do it, believe me -- the traffic crossing that bridge all the time. That building became a trip for Lance. They all had their own bathrooms, and it was a higher, yet someone seedier type of character that applied for the vacancies. The rents were higher over there. Lance had a little bit of interviewing savvy under his belt from his experiences at Appleton Street, but this would become a whole other level of judgment and acceptance according to social ability. Two things Lance used to think to himself when interviewing prospective tenants: Are they going to be able to pay the rent? and Will they vacate easily if they do get behind on their rent?

Those three guys got suckered on that friggin building, and they could never make the payments or the utilities. After Lance had been managing

the place, Tom came and told Lance that they were gonna go bankrupt. A sly tenant named Frankie who had been the on-site manager at 11<sup>th</sup> Street was there when Tom told Lance the news. It would be a couple of months before the bank would take it over. Frankie had been doing a lot of coke, and was getting sloppy and using rent money which Lance had to finagle or pay himself. Lance decided this was the time to move into the building and become the manager. He left 231 Appleton Street after 18 years. Spazz Gasket became the on-site manager at Appleton Street when Lance moved into the Christian Hill building, into the largest studio apartment there.

The bank had the building and let it go to shit -- they never fixed nothing. Lance had always been buying new equipment. He had a bass. At one time he had an authentic B C Rich Flying Eagle, a good Les Paul copy which he still has today, and a copy of a son of a Rich. In the 80's he started to use a Casio keyboard which a good friend of his named Jimmy the Roadie had loaned him. It was the size of a computer keyboard. This keyboard had auto-accompaniment. It played the drums, the bass, and played a chord when you pressed a key. After a couple of years, he got a Lowry keyboard that had the same features, but was better. He picked up a full-size keyboard from Nick D, and when he moved into the Christian Hill building, he purchased another keyboard, a Korg 01WFD. It cost over \$2000, and Lance financed it for two years. It had a disk drive, and Lance could save all his music on disk now. He created multi-layered, textural arrangements and multi-track sequences with this keyboard.

George, the original owner that Lance had worked for, bought the building back, and he and his son Geoff did a total renovation and upgraded everything in the building -- new roofs, all the studios were expanded and totally renovated. All the people who applied for studios had a credit check done. Lance had learned that interviewing, scrutinizing, inner-sensing capability of knowing people's behaviors. That, and the credit check, and George and Geoff's sensibility in choosing tenants for the building made it a haven for Lance. They did all the repairs -- all he had to do was collect the rent, take care of the grounds and the carpet inside the building, and interview prospective tenants during the week.

Things were going great in Lance's life now. He had a suitable life situation -- a good job that left him the weekends off, a home that was quiet and safe, he had begun learning acting from a famous acting teacher in Newton, and had recently purchased another music workstation called a Korg I-3. This also had a floppy disk, and had superb auto-accompaniment that Lance utilized to make his music go farther than it had ever gone before. Recently Lance purchased another Korg keyboard music workstation (an upgrade of the I-3 series) called an I-30, which Lance uses primarily to create his music today. Sometimes he still plays guitar, once in a rare while. He used to like that wild feedback crunchy sound that you got from guitar. Now he gets it from his keyboards. He's done a lot of vocal things and a lot of vocal songs as people know, and is always creating more musical designs with his keyboards and his voice and his imagination. He's been acting a



couple of years now, and has been in three or four student plays at Southwick Studio. He's studied improvisation styles from Keith Johnstone, Marjorie Burren, other improvisational techniques, and currently is seriously involved in Action Theater and improvisational techniques developed by Ruth Zaporah which he studies with her and other people whenever she comes to town. He's been doing it for a couple of years, and he plans on developing an improvisational group called the "Orchestra of Life" based on a sound Stomp-like movement and sound and the principles of Action Theater and utilizing his Korg keyboards. He's in the process of developing a website with his newly discovered friend Sidney Hipple, another performance artist who makes sculptures from sea weed and sea objects and currently does online painting.

So get ready for Lance's music and vocals and musical improvisations, stories and instrumental music, and Sidney Hipple's art gallery aptly named, "The Charles Bukowski Memorial Online Art Gallery." And of course, this story. And that's all you need to know for now.

# **Sidney Hipple**

## **The Man Without an Attitude**

Sidney Hipple's spiritual interest started in the mid-70's. It began with him reading books by Edgar Cayce and other supposed New Age writers of the 70's. Then someone turned him on to a magazine article in *High Times* on astral projection, focussing on the experiments of Robert Monroe. This out-of-body experience intrigued Sidney. It captivated his thoughts, not as an obsession, but as a practical purpose.

His reading accelerated when he moved to Lowell from Egg Village, USA. Sidney Hipple claims to come from Egg Chowder, USA, wherever that may be. People have tried to decipher his origins -- without success. His origins, as with Sidney Hipple himself, is an enigma.

An unknown person in Lowell suggested he read the books by Carlos Castaneda and Gurdjieff. He had been going to the Lowell Library and reading books about Buddhism, especially Zen Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, and other books about the world's major religions. He enjoyed a couple of things by Krishnamurti. His favorites at that time were: Carlos Castaneda, Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, and of course, Zen, and Tibetan Buddhism. The Greater Vehicle and the Short Path always appealed to Sidney.

At one point in the early 80's he attended some introductory meetings of a Boston Gurdjieff Society. These people seemed to have something on the ball, like some intellectual savvy, or at least some deep commitment to something. They talked about what Gurdjieff said about people being machines, and it sounded very fascinating and interesting. He went to all three introductory meetings. But the bottom line was: this organization of Gurdjieff's teachings asked for ten percent of your salary, or a hundred dollars a month, whichever was larger. Sidney Hipple couldn't afford that to associate with these muckety-mucks -- as he would find out that's what they were, years later. He drove a cab part-time.

Two or three years went by, and Sidney checked out the Society again. He was interested in something to join. Like the rest of humanity, he wanted to be part of something, to be with people who were thoroughly committed to something more than the daily grind of the human meat machine. At the second of these introductory meetings, he saw a flier for another Gurdjieff group. After the last meeting, he went to a meeting of the other group. These people were totally different than the first group. We're going to be getting to the Goldie Locks and the Three Bears situation in a minute here. The first group was so proper, and almost military. You were sure that none of their members smoked cigarettes, drank, cursed, or had any natural deviant side effects from life. The second group -- after the meeting, which was kind of

laid back, drank coffee and smoked cigarettes.

Sidney had been stopping at Harvard Square at the Seven Stars bookstore, buying various books by Gurdjieff. A clerk at the counter asked if Sidney had ever heard of the Gurdjieff Foundation. Sidney said no. The man said that he would give him the number the next time he came in. Sidney was checking out all possibilities, and when he went to that second meeting of the laid back group, he got the number and called someone, and was asked to call back in two weeks, which he did. He made arrangements to go down and meet this person he'd spoken to on the phone. This would turn out to be the third bowl of porridge.

He talked to the person and started to attend meetings. It took him several months, maybe as long as six months, before he ever spoke at a meeting with a remark. These people were pretty hip to something, but appeared as ordinary, likeable people. In his three years of involvement, he would participate in all the workdays, and be at all the meetings. Around that time he purchased a \$200 shitbox, and was driving from Lowell to Milton for the meetings, on workdays and on Saturdays. He was *involved*, man, he was involved. He participated in the movements, and that was a friggin strain, baby. But something didn't feel right.

One day, he saw a brochure at the house that a member in his group, the third group, who lived there, had, about yet another Gurdjieff group. It was a book by Idries Shah. For Sidney, reading Carlos Castaneda was a charm, and he even contact somebody from a magazine -- I thin it was *New Age Journal* or something -- who was interested in getting together with people who were into Carlos Castaneda. But the reality of finding in that vein was unlikely. Reading the Gurdjieff books was pretty interesting, but by the time he would ever find the inner meaning to the teachings, would be lifetimes away.

For some reason he bought a book by Idries Shah, and started reading his books. He still belonged to the Gurdjieff group, but was acquiring insights that were beyond his Gurdjieff grade of being. He eventually found it to be phony to belong to the group any longer, and eventually left.

To this day he still enjoys reading books by Idries Shah, and other Sufi publications. Even at the very least, to him they are of nutritional value. Even in an entertaining atmosphere. This was his private life.

His public life was driving the cab. Working from five in the afternoon till 11 pm or 2 in the morning, for Broadway Cab. An old guy was known to everybody including the fares as Champ. He was probably at least in his sixties, and French Canadian. He had driven a cab in Lowell for over 45 years, and was now a dispatcher. He had a girlfriend that was 21 years old, and rather portly. Some people do anything for a flesh fix, or even the possibility of getting one. And Champ put up with a lot. She was living with Champ, and at one time wanted her boyfriend on the side to live with them.

Champ would confide in Sidney about his personal issues. Sometimes Sidney would get pot to give to Champ for his girlfriend, to make her more responsive to him. Cab drivers are an interesting bunch, let me tell you.

Most of them either drink or take drugs, after, or sometimes during work, while driving their cabs. Most of them get paid every day, and live day to day. Some days you have a good day, and may bring home on a Saturday, working at least 10 hours, over seventy or eighty bucks. On a slow day, you might bring home thirty or forty. And the people you pick up are a friggin trip.

During the week at night, Sidney would pick up at the bingo parlors. You could always count on a couple of people going to the same part of town. Or you hit the train station when it comes in -- maybe someone's comin' into town. In Lowell they don't have meters in the cabs -- they work within zones. You can't be honest and drive a cab and make any money. Everybody would pick up clips. A clip in when you pick up a fare and you don't tell this dispatcher and you pocket the money. The trouble would be, that you were supposed to be in one part of town, and you were dropping off in another part of town, and they gave you a call for where you were supposed to be. You'd need to know how to do some quick explaining, or get there as fast as you could.

A cab driver is a cross between a hooker and a bartender. You got to listen to whatever the person is saying, and be their buddy. Or know to keep quiet, if they don't want to be bothered. But to get that tip, you gotta listen to people's problems, and what's happening to them in their life. A lot of people that took the cab were in that middle to upper gutter range that Sidney at that time apparently was stagnating in. A lot of people that take the cabs, don't have much of a life, or a lot of people really interested in them. But to Sidney, they were the soul of society. Sidney was always for the little guy, anyways. One of the worst injustices he sees in the human society, is when other common or ordinary people are excluded from being included in the human race. If he had one objective in life, it would be to recognize the opportunities in life to make the people who he comes in contact with, who don't feel a part of humanity, feel that they are significant. People live on significance. They wake up for it and have it for breakfast. They talk about it to their friends and their family. They wash it off when they take shower, and it comes out of their ass when they shit. In some cases that can be fine. But when you look at yourself as being the only significant one -- and granted, everybody thinks they're the center of the universe, and rightfully so --

In the past couple of years, Sidney Hipple has developed a style of sculpture using materials from the ocean and the seashore, mostly vegetation. He has called them "Marine Microcosms: the Diogenes Series." He is currently doing a lot of online painting, which are used for cover art for the songs of Lance Gargoyle. Someone turned him on to the novels of Charles Bukowski, which he had read a little about earlier. Since he like reading biographies, he read Bukowski's, and everything else he wrote, except for his poetry. He has decided to call his gallery "The Charles Bukowski Memorial Online Art Gallery."

He no longer drives cabs, but there may be other stories in the future about those days. He works at a wash and fold laundromat in Lowell, his

dream job, and is developing, with Lance Gargoyle, the Orchestra of Life, developed from the Orchestra of Sound.

Oh, I forgot to mention through all of this. His adventure apparently started in Egg Chowder, USA. When someone told him he resembled a person who was called Lance Gargoyle, who lived in Lowell -- this intrigued him, and he moved to Lowell. It took him years to find Lance Gargoyle, because of Lance's elusive nature. But recently he has found Lance, and they have collaborated on this online experience.

But let me leave you with a couple of words from Sidney Hipple: "Nobody wants to feel like a piece of shit. Like nothing they say or nothing they do or nothing they think matters to anyone besides themselves. It doesn't take much to make somebody feel like an active member of the human race. It takes a lot to remember to do it when the opportunity arises."

# PANTY CULT

## The Movie

### 1

An alien space ship lands in New Hampshire due to mechanical problems. While one of the aliens is doing the repairs, the other one leaves the ship and goes and stands in a stream and takes a dump. They're not supposed to leave anything on any planet - he knows he's fucking up, but he doesn't give a shit. The creature is brown, and resembles a *big* mound of dirt. He steps out of the water, and we see what appears to be a brown rock under the water, a leftover from his extraterrestrial bowels. He reenters the ship, and the ship takes off.

### 2

The stream leads to a local bottling plant. The cosmic rock

erodes away very slowly, affecting the water going to the bottling plant. It would take at least two hundred years to totally disappear. The plant was going out of business, but suddenly it becomes a hit.

### 3

The plant was owned by two Italian guys: the Scumunghi brothers. One brother, Earl, was very conservative. The other brother, Harry, was very extravagant, and always wasted money. Earl would no sooner deposit a check than Harry would be there to withdraw the money. Harry gambles, chased women, and drank heavily.

### 4

Harry had three children with a sometime gold-digger named Gladys Witts. Their names were Nit, Half, and Dim. Harry's spending caused Earl to have a heart attack, and he became a turnip for the rest of his life until he died.

### 5

Gladys took off and left them when Nit was only five. Half was three and Dim was two. Harry brought up the three boys the best he could after Gladys left. He didn't know how to raise children, and he wasn't set up in life to be a father, but he did the best he could. He was a simple man. With his brother dead and

his Gladys gone, he could no longer continue his extravagant lifestyle.

## 6

The boys when they were teenagers worked at the bottling plant. At that time it was a five man operation. Dad like delivering, and he was always on the truck. Nit, the brains of the family, or rather, the closest to a brain in the family, did sales. Dim worked in the warehouse loading the trucks - he was the muscle. Not a lot upstairs, just unbending strength. He also did all the cleaning. Half learned the machinery, and could fix almost anything.

## 7

Eventually Harry started to get involved with the life of striptease artists - he was obsessed with one in particular, called Butch. Feminine, but masculine at the same time. Lipstick, and grinding her teeth. And piercing eyes. Harry was a sucker for a sob story, and she had a couple hundred of them. Harry only had a hear a half a dozen of them before he was hooked, and in love. Harry was spending all of his time there, at the Three Z's. The boys took a stand, and told Harry to get the fuck out, and don't come back until you either take your fingers out of your ass, or your girlfriend's snatch.

The boys started to run the plant themselves. They were all in their early twenties by now, and were used to running the place. But now Harry had spent all their money, all the advances, and put a third mortgage on the plant. They lost their home - they were living at the plant now. They were an inch away from bankruptcy when orders started pouring in for the water. They would soon recover, and one day become respectable members of society.

(The following scenes take place in Lowell, Massachusetts, two years later.)

The water affects perspiration, especially women's crotch sweat, which becomes like an intoxicating drug. The water has no apparent effect on people, but men discover they get high from sniffing soiled women's underwear.

Like: a man is making love to his girlfriend, and he's pulling her panties off, and he discovers that he's in a slightly intoxicated



state.

Different areas and odors from the women's underwear had different effects.

Unfortunately, the intoxicating effect of any particular pair of panties would wear off after a short period of time.

## 11

Perspiration: gives you the feel of marijuana.

>> for the normal guys

>> scenes of going to make a buy: Most dealers keep a low profile – these are the majority of the people that sniff panties.

This is the most desired effect -- mellows people out. Some people take three sniffs, some need as many as seven. Users can become burn-outs if they do it too much. This is the most beneficial effect

## 12

Ass stains: give the sensation of drinking alcohol.

>> scene of jocks sniffing as they watch sports on TV, guys who like simple repetitive patterns

It's the weekend,. The wife comes in and says, "Is that all you guys are going to do all weekend, is get shit-faced?"

## 13

Urine: effects similar to cocaine, crack and speed.

>> for the overly excitable, wired, flamboyant , teeth-grinding, somewhat paranoid types

>> always looking for a bigger fix, and better purity

>> scenes of going to make a buy: two by four stopping the door, just a slot in the door. Most of these dealers don't sniff, they're only in it for the money, they're not hooked. There are the hipster dealers in the restrooms at the new dance discotheques.

>> You're already high on the way to get it, you can already taste it, that's how strong it is, you're getting high just from the anticipation – you're brain is producing the same chemicals just from the expectation.

## 14

Menstrual blood: the feeling of barbiturates, heroin, and hard liquor, percocet and all of that shit, the artificial downers.

## 15

Sexual secretions: like the psychedelics, LSD, mescaline, mushrooms, nitrous oxide – “That's what makes those panties so rare.”

>> while listening to the Grateful Dead. The acid person: at ease with himself, in touch with reality, conscious of his surroundings,

always deflecting tense situations

>> scenes of going to make a buy:

16

### “The Carrot People”

The normal people who don't indulge. Main principle: work only for rewards. Opposite of the stick people, who live for self-punishment. Always looking ahead, to the next move, a big term for them, the next move. Do anything to get to the top. Phony as they come, influenced by the media. They look down on Jerry Springer, but deep down inside they want to watch. The kings and queens of hypocrisy. Sidney Hipple refers to them as “androids” and says, joking about their inner circuitry, “Be careful clicking those garage door openers, these people are going to be bumping into the walls. They ignore the common thread of society.”

17

Naturally dealers are dealing mainly in one type of secretion.

18

TV commercial for an workout club that offers free memberships in return for their sweaty panties at the end of every workout. (Panties with a patch on the back, so the panties are primarily sweat oriented.)

19

Most panties that you buy on the street are like potluck – you never know what odor you’re going to get – you get a little up, you get a little down, you go sideways, a couple of left turns, the next thing you know, you don’t know where you are.

20

A scene: Four people on stage, all under the influence of different panties, having a conversation, taking sniffs as they go along, going more and more deeply under.

21

Word circulates. Soon there are panty-dealers selling soiled panties, just like they sell drugs.

22

[Panty dealing scenarios are similar to marijuana and cocaine scenarios. – “Waiting for the man, money in my hand...”]

Panty dealers in Lowell, panties sold in shrink-wrap baggies.

23

Drug sales plummet across the city. People aren’t buying drugs any more, they’re buying panties instead. Sniffing panties

makes people very mellow, which helps decrease violent crimes – for the most part.

<scenarios of various drug stereotypes>

## 24

Takes place in an alley in Lowell.

Three or four police cruisers are blocking off the alley. Zoom in on a man face down in the alley, with something on his head, which appears to be a pair of women's panties. Two detectives and three plain clothes men. The coroner is there, and he turns the body over. One of the officers says: "Another panty O.D." The dead man's name is Dino Costello, a close childhood friend of Tony D'Wonderful.

## 25

Dino was the one person that believed in Tony and thought he was interesting and not a failure.

## 26

Takes place at Wing Wang's Chinese Restaurant, owned by George Annapopolis, a local property owner—he owns the last rooming house with hallway bathrooms. (Show George collecting rents.)

Tony is reading of his friend's demise in the newspaper.

27

Tony works at Wing Wang's delivering take-out.

28

Sometimes the owner George lets him perform his lounge singer act when the take-out orders are slow.

29

Tony also moonlights as a private detective, mainly divorce. In his spare time he videotapes stag parties.

30

Vito Vasellini, local mob figure, calls for a take-out. Obviously George treats him like royalty because of his reputation, and because every time he calls, it's at least a \$60 order.

Tony arrives at Vito's. Vito is discussing minor mob business with henchman goon Danny Dupa.

Tony rings the door bell. Dupa lets him in. Everybody calls him "Dupa."

Vito is having a party, some kind of party. He tells Dupa to tell them that he'll be right there. He greets Tony, and pulls him aside. Tony hands the food to Dupa, and Dupa takes it in to the party. Vito wants a word with Tony.

Vito wants to see if Tony can be trusted. There is a very large shipment coming in of designer panties that Vito is shipping out to California, where good panties are hard to come by. Vito has a private processing plant, smaller than his sweatshops, where he had women constantly drinking fluids and working out on exercise machines. He collects the panties every three days.

Inside the sweatshop room we see a bottled water dispenser with “Scumunghi” crossed off, and “Witt Brothers” written in glow-in-the-dark orange. The girls drink a lot of this water, and that’s what makes the panties so potent after three days.

People don’t know a lot about panties, or why they get people high, but Vito knew that sweaty almost cakey panties were not only super-potent, but would last longer. He vacuum packed every pair himself. Dupa would watch, hoping that someday he could do it. Vito had to stay straight when he did it. The panties were so potent, Vito had to wear a mask to keep from getting high. Even two feet away, you could feel the effects. That’s why he vacuum packed every pair right away.

Dupa never wore a mask – he was immune to getting high from panties. The shit stains didn’t get him drunk, the piss stains didn’t mellow him out, the blood stains, even heavy blood stains,

had no effect at all. When friends came around to Vito's private plant, he'd make Dupa wear a bloody, scabby pair over his nose, with no effect whatsoever. People were amazed at his tolerance.

### 33

The truth was, Dupa burnt out his nose on paint thinner when he was just a teenager, before he first met Vito. Believe it or not, Vito helped change Dupa's life. Dupa didn't want Vito to know he was a glue-head.

### 34

Vito gives Tony a package and asks him to deliver it to Gallagher Station at one o'clock, after Tony makes his last delivery. The guy will be wearing a plaid sports coat and brown penny loafers. There will be no exchange – Tony just gives him the package, the guy doesn't give him anything. The package is wrapped in brown paper, about the size of eight or ten folded shirts. (a brick of panties)

Vito gives Tony the money for the food, and a \$40 tip. Tony leaves.

### 35

Takes place at the Gallagher Bus Terminal.

Two cabs are waiting outside, waiting for passengers from the train. The train comes in from Boston.



Tony has ten minutes before the passengers reach the exit, so he goes to the bathroom. He goes in the stall, and delicately probes the package with his fingers, assuming that they're panties. He pulls out a pair, without disturbing the package, and puts it in his back pocket.

Tony D'Wonderful is a joy popper – someone who just sniffs panties every once and a while, he's not hooked.

### 36

Tony leaves the bathroom and sees what looks like the pick-up guy. He's very overweight, with pitted skin and sunglasses, like an overweight Charles Bukowski. He reeks of patchouli oil and Old Spice.

The guy says, "You got the package from Mr. V?" Tony says "Yeah," and hands him the package. The man leaves, and walks out the side door towards the parking garage.

### 37

Tony is outside talking to a cabbie friend, Arthur. Arthur is a local underground jazz musician, who is forced to drive a cab. He is one of the most humble and most genuine people that Tony knows.

Tony sees another man lurking in the terminal like he's looking for somebody—he's dressed like the pick-up guy. Tony thinks, "I might have given it to the wrong guy."

He walks around the corner to get a paper, and sees the pick-up man drive out of the garage. He seems him take off what looks like a wig –she has cropped hair. She takes off the plaid sports jacket, exposing extremely large breasts. Now Tony realizes this wasn't the right pick-up man – it appears to be a woman. She seems somewhat familiar. Now Tony knows he's in trouble.

The scene fades with Tony looking at the train pulling out.

### 39

This was a trial shipment of Vito's prize panties. Vito would be furious, but still remain in control. It was only a small shipment. Now he would have the women wear the panties for five days if necessary, and charge more when he sold them.

### 40

The next scene opens at 231 Appleton Street, a rooming house owned by his boss at Wing Wang's, George Annanopolis.

Tony is lying in bed, his pillow wrapped around his head. Someone knocks on the door and he awakes. We see that Tony is still fully clothed, except for his shoes, and his tie is loose.

He answers the door – it's Goodtime Eddie Blank, looking to give Tony \$5 if he can get him some panties.

Tony says, "Give me the twenty and the five. Come back in six hours - I'll try to get some today."

41

Usually Eddie gets them from the hookers, but he always gets burnt. Eddie wants to hang around with Tony, but Tony says, "If you want me to get the panties, get away from me." Eddie leaves.

Tony takes his towel, soap, underwear, and a pair of pants, and goes downstairs and down the hall the common bathroom, and takes a shower.

42

Tony's day starts with looking into his friend Dino's demise. He's heard about other people OD-ing on panties, and he knows about a man named Sidney Hipple, nicknamed "the Prince of Panties."

43

Sidney Hipple only had one fantasy in his head: that he would be able to control time and make it stop. Life would be frozen, but touchable, and he could do whatever he wanted. No one would ever be violated or affected by his behavior. There were no limits to what his fantasies would become. Sniffing soiled panties had always taken the edge off. Years later, in the future,

he would be well known as a Professor of Panty-ology. And he would be distinguished, but that's another story for another time.

Stefano's Wash & Fold where Sidney Hipple works as assistant manager.

It's three in the afternoon, and Sidney has come on shift.

## 44

### Background on Sidney

When he was a child, his mother had lingerie parties. Sidney, being young and innocent, was allowed to come in and watch. When the women changed their panties, they'd let him take them to the hamper. He started sniffing them, and eventually became quite good.

Now he can smell a pair of soiled panties and be able to tell not only age and nationality, but also what they had for supper and other peculiar hidden traits.

## 45

Sidney conducted extensive research in the five basic stains and their effects. Years ago, when Sidney was a connoisseur of panties, they never seemed to get him high. Not until recently, the past two years. His current discoveries in panty research proved that different panty stains had different effects. He was the only one that knew this. Some people had an idea about it, maybe, but nobody knew for sure. All they knew was, sweaty

ones got you high, like smoking pot or some good hash. Some nationalities could be a little bit like Thai stick. Strange as it seems, Mexican women would have the effect of Acapulco Gold. Sidney was in a position to study the panties that came in to the laundry to process and return.

46

Panty-sniffing was an East Coast phenomenon. Panties were shipped to the West Coast, and to Canada, until one day when the Witt brothers thriving business in bottled water became national, and then international.

The water had already started to affect plant life.

47

Someone tells Tony to see Sidney Hipple. Tony thinks Sidney Hipple may be the one who's tainting the panties. He goes to investigate.

48

Tony walks in, carrying his laundry, looking like he lost his best friend in the world. He puts his clothes in a washer, and goes to the desk to get quarters for the machine. As Sidney is giving him the quarters, he sees how bummed out he is, and asks what's wrong.

Tony plays dumb and asks, "You know anything about soiled

panties?”

Sidney downplays his expertise and says little.

Tony tells him how the panties were hijacked, and that Vito will eventually find out.

## 49

Sidney tells Tony how he gets panties: When women bring in their laundry, he takes out the choice panties, and the next day buys identical panties to replace them. The women always come back because their underwear turns out like brand new. Now he has a supply in the back of all different types. Sidney tells Tony: “You probably lost a brick of panties – that’s 144 pairs. Come back in five days, I’ll see what I can do, I’ll call in a couple of favors.”

## 50

Tony leaves the Wash & Fold with his clean laundry. He stops at a pay phone and calls Wing Wang’s. He tells George he won’t be in to work, he’s not feeling well. George says, “Don’t give me that shit, I know it’s this private detective bullshit you’re working on. If you’re not here by 8 o’clock, don’t come back.”

Tony sits down on a park bench and the scene fades out.

## 51

Tony back at work at 8 o’clock, making a delivery up on

Andover Street. He drops off the food – it's Lotta Gue's place. She recognizes him as the panty pickup guy. He recognizes her from the heist, when he saw her take off the wig at the bus terminal. They both play dumb. Neither one knows they've been recognized.

52

Tony goes back to Wing Wang's to do some more deliveries, and finally gets off at 12:30. He picks up his friend Spaz Gasket, an over-excitabile jittery bohemian type, who is out late hanging out, getting out from a jam session at the Rialto. He talks about the jam that Tony missed, and how hot it was. "Dave Duck was laying down some crazy beats. Lance Gargoyle was there."

53

Lance rented a practice room above the Rialto and had jams there every Tuesday night. It was usually Dave Duck on drums, Johnny B on bass and guitar, and sometimes vocals, and Lance on guitar, synthesizer, and vocals. This night Spaz was allowed to recite his poetry as the guys improvised a jam. Lance always recorded every time he played, and had hundreds of tapes from dozens of jam sessions. Tony always wanted to be at the jams, but always had to work Tuesday night. That's the night that George's daughter always took off to go play bingo at St. Patrick's church.

Tony asks Spaz to do him a favor. He doesn't want Spaz to know the real reason. A very important man wants him to keep an eye on his wife. He needs someone to watch the coast while Tony does a little snoop-d-snoop. Obviously he's looking into Lotta Gue.

They sit in Tony's old Dodge Dart (with a slant six) over on a side street, until the last person leaves Lotta Gue's party. Tony still has the panties in his back pocket, and he offers them to Spaz in appreciation for helping him out. Tony says he'll be right back, he's going to try to get inside.

The bulkhead door is unlocked, and he enters the basement.

Lotta Gue's living room.

Tony is peeking in through the cellar door.

Lotta Gue is talking to her left hand girl Snookie Lumps, and a half a dozen of her close confidantes who call themselves "the Daughters of Sappho."

Lotta Gue looks like an updated Mole McHenry, but with even more of an attitude. She comes from family that used to be well off, but lost it all. Her father was a pharmacist and owned a pharmacy, but lost his business.



57

Lotta has multiple personality disorder from intense pain as a child. Major personality: sweet as pie, that's Lotta. The girl next door, your high school prom date, confident social personality.

58

Secondary personality: "Joey" -- doesn't feel any pain, always hurting himself for the fun of it. Her left arm has a close row of scars from her wrist all the way up her forearm. Plucks her tangled pubic hair when she gets frustrated or when someone tries to overpower her – she'll want to do that, anyway — a lot of times she won't be able to, which is why she wants to get away from the person who's trying to overpower her.

Lotta has the style of a feminist Mussolini or a dedicated mad scientist. She's bragging about how her scheme to poison the panties is right on schedule.

59

Lotta studies the Cabala. She finds a formula that mixes in the tears of the grieving – which are naturally hard to come by, and for which there is no substitute. She tells her Snookie Lumps and her other six confidantes that they have to start attending

more funerals and collecting tear-soaked handkerchiefs, while she works on a synthetic replacement. She tells the girls to get out there and spread their panties around, and they'll meet again in a couple of days.

60

Tony overhears all this. He slips away to rejoin Spaz. Spaz is slouched down in the passenger seat with little headphones on, listening to the Mother's Fillmore East album. Tony gets in, looks at Spaz and grins, and starts to drive away.

61

It's 2 o'clock in the morning and they stop at Merit Station to get some gas. Tony is filling his tank when Dupa drives up with Vito.

Tony naturally acts like nothing's wrong. Vito rolls down the tinted side window and motions with his head for Tony to come over. Tony gets into Vito's block-long limo.

Vito asks Tony if the exchange worked out all right. Tony says sure, he saw the guy, he gave him the package. Vito says he didn't get the package - "You know what that means?" Tony says, "Someone else got the package?" "That's right, bright balls. And who do you think is going to replace the package?" Tony says, "I don't know." Vito says, "Don't play dumb, you do it too well. Them was real special panties for some Hollywood bigshots. I got a

delivery date in three days. Get them panties or \$5000.”

62

Vito has a flashback

In a way Vito feels kind of bad for Tony. Tony reminds Vito of the guys he used to see when he worked at the porno shop. Besides cleaning the semen off the walls, the floor, and sometimes the ceiling in the booths in the back – and a lot on the screen, Vito would work at the desk, taking money and seeing the people that purchased pornography. Vito looked at these people with disgust. Vito was a crude mother-fucker, and kind of a fucking degenerate, but he wasn't gonna let no one else know it. His register was like a toll booth – you always bought something before you left. He saw those guys and what they bought. You learn a lot about people from how they look and what pornography they would buy. There were a lot of steady customers, and Vito despised every single one of them. He never smiled, he never made eye contact, he wouldn't even acknowledge their existence outside of his little toll booth. He looked at the men who came in, and saw their lives as needing this fulfillment. Some people came in, went to the section they knew, picked out what they wanted, paid for it and left. Some would browse, undecided about which to choose.

Vito saw these men and he knew their weakness. Someday he would use it with panties. Vito never saw Tony come inside the porno shop, but he looked like one of the guys that should have.

Tony tries to explain to Vito about Lotta Gue and the Daughters of Sappho, but Vito gives him a slap on the side of the head and tells him to shut up, he don't want to hear it. Dupa rolls down the privacy window and looks back and grins. Tony gets out of the limo.

Mort Morgan's Mortuary.

A cadaver is lying on the slab with a sheet over it. The corpse sits up and the sheet falls off him: he's naked, he's a zombie. Apparently the soiled panty O.D. makes its victims come back to life as zombies – they don't want to eat flesh, they want to dance – they have a hip attitude. Their bodies don't decay.

The zombie puts on a pair of sweatpants lying nearby and a Captain Beefheart T-shirt, and bebops out the side door. He doesn't look reanimated in the least, he looks like some cool dude.

We see him walking the street. He doesn't know where he's going, but he has this instinctive desire to travel north, to Manchester.

(Lotta Gue was tainting panties as an experiment: only 7 or 12 sniffers got an O.D. and became zombies.

Lotta Gue's formula (which got destroyed) was called ZX-21.

66

The zombies become "Guardians of the Pool" after they drink the water from the Source - and that's how they find out the whole story of how it started.

67

If the rock affects the water, if someone knew it was that rock, and they got a piece of the rock, it could be very powerful, because of the effect it has on perspiration. That's where the Guardians come in. Now the zombies are completely reanimated and look normal again. They take up residence and get jobs in the local area.

They become part of the community, and to guard the Cosmic Mound, they earn enough money to buy the piece of land that has the stream on it.

68

They start experimenting with minute pieces of the rock to gauge their effects on them. Remember, these people have already died and come back to life with all normal bodily functions reactivated. They are experimenting with the very source of the phenomenon that had made them what they are.

Vito at home. The décor is Mafia modern: a velvet painting of Elvis, a crocodile pond in the living room with a plexiglass wall around it. There's a gap between the plexiglass and the floor, big enough for Vito to tease the crocodiles, but too small for them to escape through. There's a big black leather easy chair. On the mantle over the fireplace there's a gallon mayonnaise jar, three-quarters filled with formaldehyde and big toes. Next to the jar there's a small wooden buddha – Vito's like a new age don. On his bookshelf we see books by Alan Watts, Rajneesh, Ruth Montgomery, along with Abbie Hoffman's *Steal This Book*.

Vito is dressed in a purple silk bathrobe and fluffy slippers. Dupa comes in with something to eat: a platter of oreos and glass of red wine.

Vito starts thinking about Lotta Gue and what Tony said. Lotta Gue's father was a regular guy – Vito pictures this in his mind. He ran a drugstore and an employee and friend of Vito's was stealing drugs for years. Lotta Gue's father got blamed, lost his business, and went to jail for a short time. Eventually he had a nervous breakdown and became a mental patient.

Vito realizes that Lotta Gue is involved in the panty theft,

and he and Dupa go to see her. Snookie Lumps is there with Lotta on the couch watching television. Vito rings the bell and we hear the sound of a cat's meow, which the bell makes.

The camera zooms to Snookie Lumps' feet in men's slippers from L.L.Bean. Her feet go from the hassock to the floor. Her face looks at Lotta and she goes to answer the door. She looks out the peephole, and sees Vito and Dupa.

When Vito sees her eye through the peephole, he spits at the peephole, pushes the door open, and enters.

We now see Snookie Lumps dressed in flannel pajamas and a trench coat type bathrobe.

At that moment, Lotta looks shocked. Snookie Lumps stands in front of Vito. Dupa goes up to her, pushes her aside. Vito walks up to Lotta and says, " I want them friggin panties back. I know you're the fucks that took 'em." It's rare, but Lotta and Snookie Lumps are wired on coke, celebrating the big score. Because they're wired, they're kind of sloppy, and have thrown the panties up in the air in celebration. Lotta says, "I'm a woman, I got panties."

Vito looks around the room and sees the panties strewn about, picks up one of them, and takes a long hard sniff. He says, "I can tell my panties when I sniff 'em."

Lotta knows she's been bagged. Vito looks at Dupa and says, "What do you think we should do, Dupe?" (Vito is the only one who can call Dupa "Dupe".)

Dupa puts his speaking device to his throat to speak and says in a gargling voice, “Let’s fuck ‘em up.”

Vito says, “Maybe we can make a deal here.”

Snookie Lumps looks at Dupa, and she’s almost in attack mode. Dupa looks at her with his piercing eyes, grinds his teeth back and forth like he’s crushing caraway seeds. Snookie knows what Dupa’s bite can do.

As he’s walking around the room collecting the panties, Vito is counting, “One potato, two potato, three potato, more...” He pushes Lotta forward, takes the pillow from behind her back, and pulls off the pillow case. He puts the panties he’s picked up into the pillow case, hands it to Dupa, and tells him to pick up the rest.

Lotta looks terrified. Vito looks at Dupa and tells him to assume the position. Dupa immediately drops the bag with the panties he’s collected, grabs Snookie Lumps by the head, and puts her ear in his mouth and clamps down. Vito’s final revenge.

Lotta Gue says, “Wait a minute!” Though she’s wired on coke, she still has some sensibility. “With those Hollywood big shots not getting the panties, there’s gonna be a drought, they’re gonna be more strung out than ever. And you know what happens every time there’s a drought? Prices always go up.”

Dupa looks at Vito with the uncontrollable urge to bite off Snookie Lumps’ ear. The last thing Dupa bit off was someone’s thumb, and that was over two years ago. To Dupa, biting off Snookie Lumps’ ear would be equal to winning \$2000 on a scratch ticket—that thrill, that excitement!



Vito is about to give Dupa the okay. Lotta Gue stands up and says, “What do you think would happen if you put a woman’s picture on each package of panties? You think that might add to the appeal a little bit? Think you could charge a little bit more for ‘em?”

Vito snaps his fingers, and instinctively Dupa releases his hold. Lotta Gue has got Vito’s attention now.

Lotta says, “How many people you think buy panties?”

Vito says, “What are you trying to say?”

Lotta says, “Nobody puts pictures of a good looking woman on the package to add to the fantasy and the drug inducement. You could be the all-time panty king. This could be a new era in soiled panties. An innovation will totally revolutionize the marketing of soiled panties. I highjacked your panties to see what their potency level was, and they went off the meter. I don’t know what you did to those panties, but those are the most powerful panties imaginable.”

Vito pictures in his mind the process he uses to get the panties so potent, and realizes that having various innocent-looking young women on the package would add to their appeal.

Lotta makes a face that shows that she see that Vito sees it’s a brilliant idea. Vito looks up like Napoleon – he sees his place in history.

As Dupa continues to collect the rest of the panties, the scene fades.

Final scene: Tony joins Panty Sniffers Anonymous

# Panty Cult: the Credit Song

An alien took a dump, it hardened in a stream  
Before you knew it bottled water was a scream

The people drank it but didn't feel affected  
Crotch perspiration became the new sensation

Then there were dealers with panties in bag

Drug addicts bought them

They found a new high

The police got involved, but couldn't find out why

There was decrease in violent crimes

They mellowed out, they mellowed out

No more methadone

No more cocaine

No more heroin

No more weed

Soiled panties were all they would need

(solo)

If you've been sleepin' and

Your underwear's been creepin'

Check out your hamper, you might

Find out it's been tampered

If something's missin', then

Somebody might be sniffin'

It's an addiction, a high

Pulled out from whiffin'

The drugs we used to do don't matter

Now it's panty goo

An alien took a dump, it hardened in a stream

Before you knew it bottled water was a scream

It's only Panty Cult, no need in freakin' out

You can do them by yourself

You don't need no one else

For Panty Cult

For Panty Cult

Panty Cult II

Premise: soiled panties are all the rage. A company develops

soiled panty air freshener: incense, the ones you hang from your rearview window. The company is called Private Scents.

The Panty Cartel doesn't like this, because people aren't buying panties as much anymore.

Unusual new panty paraphernalia is coming on the market.

Celebrity panties are in vogue.

"Panties of the Rich and Famous"

Panty scents packaged in a set of twelve different scents. There's a chart that tells you which ones are choose to get the desired nationality – you can even make up your own nationalities, that's the fun of it.

A feud between the Panty Cartel and this new company Private Scents.

Lotta Gue, with a background in chemistry and cosmetics, makes a comeback as the instigator of Panty Scents.

### Panty Cult III

Sidney Hipple and his sculptures: Sidney has Soul.

Positive alien entities inhabit the structures to counteract the effects of the mystery rock and the panty cult phenomenon.

Dull people decide to be dull. Anything you don't want to .

